

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
FOR THE YEAR 1945

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the time your Medical Officer of Health for the year 1945 would normally have prepared his Annual Report for that year he (Dr.H.G.Robinson) was a very sick man. His death on the 12th July, 1946 was, I am sure, much mourned by every member of the Council and perhaps more so by the officers in the Department with which his activities over a period of about 25 years were particularly associated. His genial disposition and untiring interest in his many activities and the high pressure under which he toiled during enemy air raids in the early part of 1941 appeared to leave upon him an effect from which he never recovered.

As his successor I have compiled this report from the registers, notes and information handed to me on taking up the appointment of Medical Officer of Health. Though I have every reason to believe the report to be almost identical to the one which Dr.Robinson would have submitted, I cannot, of course, give any guarantee to that effect.

The report for the year 1945 follows somewhat previous war-time reports owing to war conditions continuing until the latter part of the year. Economic restrictions must inevitably continue for a considerable period after the war and much work, necessary as indeed it is, postponed, to enable super priority matters, such as the provision of housing accommodation for those who are in special need, to take precedence. The Council's past activities in regard to the provision of piped water supplies has been amply reflected in its contribution to the Nation's requirements during the war, but places still remain in the district which are in need of piped supplies. A special section of this report is being devoted to the district's water supply and other sections will deal with housing, sewerage, etc.

SECTION A.     STATISTICS.

Population.

The estimated population for the year is 16,500 and the acreage 48,400.

Agriculture continues to be the chief industry with fruit and flower culture forming an important and remunerative part. The district is rich in pasture land and milk production has a very attractive outlet in a flourishing Creamery establishment in a neighbouring district. Coastal areas are largely patronised during the holiday season and the extreme south-eastern part of the district has an active connection with the Plymouth Dockyard as well as the Naval and Military establishments in the locality.



Vital Statistics.

<u>Live Births.</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	95	79	174
Illegitimate	4	7	11
<u>Stillbirths</u>			
Legitimate	2	3	5
Illegitimate	1	-	1

The Birth Rate per thousand population - 11.2

Stillbirth rate per thousand population - 0.36

Live-birth rate England & Wales - 16.1

Stillbirth rate England & Wales - 0.46

According to the Registrar-General's figures the number of deaths in the district for the year was 218, representing a death rate of 13.88, compared with 11.4 for England and Wales.

Appended is a table of causes of death and age incidence recorded.



Disease

Causes of Death & Age Incidence

	M.	F.	Un- der 1	1 2	2 5	5 15	15 25	25 35	35 45	45 55	55 65	65 75	75 & over
Whooping Cough	-	-											
Tuberculosis:-													
Respiratory	2	3					1	1	1	1	1		
Other	2					1	1						
Syphilite	1											1	
Influenza	2												2
Cancer:-													
Oesophagus	1	1										1	1
Uterus	-	-											
Stomach	3	1							1	2	1		
Breast		4						2	1				1
Other	12	7							1	7	6	5	
Diabetes:-	4	3					5				1	2	1
Intra Cranial	13	13									2	9	15
Vascular	-	-											
Heart Disease	40	22		1				4	4	11	16	26	
Other Circulatory	6	3							1	2	3	3	
Diphtheria		1											1
Appendicitis	1									1			
Cirrhosis of Liver		1				1							
Other diseases of liver		3								1	1	1	
Bronchitis	11	2							1	1	3	8	
Pneumonia	3	2									3	2	
Other respiratory	2						1					1	
Ulcer of Stomach	2							1		1			
Other Digestive		2									1	1	
Nephritis	5	6							4	2	3	2	
Puerperal Cause		1							1				
Premature birth congenital	2	2	4										
Suicide		1									1		
Road Traffic	2								2				
Other Violence	1	1						1			1		
All other causes	11	13			1		1	3		1	4	14	
	125	92	4		1	1	2	7	12	17	33	57	84





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SECTION B.

(1) PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS.

Mr. Govett, your Chief Sanitary Inspector, who during the year 1944 was left practically alone with his work in the district was in January greatly assisted by the return of Mr. W.E. Grylls, who is familiar with the district and has been very valuable in general inspectoral and administrative work. Much, however, remains to be done and the return to the district of Mr. Williams will raise the staffing status of the department to a desirable level.

(2) Bacteriological investigations continue to be carried out for the district by arrangement with the County Laboratories at Truro and the Prince of Wales Hospital, Plymouth.

(3) Ambulance facilities are available at Callington and Saltash as occasion requires.

(4) The County Nursing Association's activities in the district remain practically as before, though some improvement in the travelling facilities of the district nurses is overdue.

(5) The County Council is mainly responsible for Maternity and Child Welfare work and the Infant and Child Welfare Clinic at Callington continues to function satisfactorily.

SECTION C.

WATER SUPPLY.

Following the passing of the Rural Water Supplies & Sewerage Act, 1944, one of the Minister's Engineering Inspectors made a survey of the waterworks in the district and the County generally and his report to the Minister will presumably be made in due course but as it is apparently desired that a fairly comprehensive reference should be made in this report on the present position of the district water supply the following information might be appreciated.

The rateable value of the district is approximately £60,000 and there are 16 Parishes, all of which have piped supplies to the approximate extent indicated below.

Parish	No. of Houses (Est.)	Domestic Supplies	Trade Supplies
Antony	135	89	12
Botusfleming	70	25	11
Callington	520	485	72
Calstock	1310	1287	172
Landrake	185	115	12
Landulph	125	60	12
Maker	245	197	7
Millbrook	510	488	17
Pillett	82	26	9
Quethiock	39	29	12
Rome	156	147	7
St. Dominic	172	56	31
St. Germans	516	392	55
St. John	42	8	6
St. Mellion	53	19	7
Shevelock	129	103	5





The main source of supply is from the South East Cornwall Water Board's source on Bodmin Moor at an elevation of about 800 O.D. The constituent members of the Board are this Council and the Looe Urban District Council and the normal available quantity of water for supply to each constituent authority is 400,000 gallons per day. In addition the Council retain some of their old sources and these include

Sources at Calstock having D.W.F. of 85,000 g.p.d.
" " Millbrook " " " 50,000 "
" " Downderry " " " 10,000 "
" " Callington " " " 10,000 "

Other sources vested in the Council are subject to contaminating influence and would not be utilised excepting in an emergency when any obvious precautionary measure, including chlorination, would be adopted.

The present civil requirements of the district amount to approximately 300,000 g.p.d. for domestic purposes and 65,000 for trade, including agriculture, and it is expected that the future demand for this industry will be considerably increased. During the war about 110,000 g.p.d. were supplied to His Majesty's Forces stationed in the district and it is estimated that the peace time requirements in this connection will not be less than 60,000 g.p.d.

Within the district there are about 3900 watermain services of which 3540 are taken from the mains vested in the Council. The Board's mains are chiefly for the purpose of conveying water to salient points either within the district or for supplies to neighbouring districts, chief of which is Looe, a constituent member of the Water Board. Distribution to consumers is mainly from the Council's own mains and amounts to 90% of the total. All mains are tapped for individual services by the Council's permanent staff and the normal rules and regulations in regard to services apply. A correct record of the number of houses taking supplies from public standpipes is not available but it is estimated that the number is less than 5% of the total houses supplied from the mains.

The Moorland water from the Water Board's Gathering Ground is acid and plumbo solvent but a modern neutralising plant is provided at their filtration works near the Intakes where chlorination of the water is also carried out. Thus the water after treatment is regarded as safe for drinking and all other domestic purposes. Calstock water is also acid and is passed through lime stone filter beds and chlorinated before delivery into the service reservoirs. Water from the Council's other sources is mostly fairly hard and treatment other than chlorination is not required to make it safe for drinking.



The following are characteristic analyses of samples taken from the Board's supply (a) and the supplies at Calstock (b), Donderry (c), Millbrook (d) and Callington (e).

Chemical.

	Parts per 100,000				
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Total solids	14.0	10.4	7.5	39.4	13.8
Total hardness	6.0	6.5	6.3	29.8	5.6
Permanent hardness	3.0	5.5	3.0	11.6	4.6
Temporary hardness	3.0	3.0	3.3	18.2	1.0
Chlorine	3.8	1.9	2.9	4.7	2.1
as Sodium Chloride	6.3	3.1	4.68	7.75	3.46
Nitrates	.02	0.03	0.4	2.8	3.2
Nitrites	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Free Ammonia	.0003	.0003	.0002	.0028	.0016
Albuminoid Ammonia	.0005	.0012	.0048	.0032	.0028
Oxygen absorbed from permanganate	.05	.02	-	.0506	.1146
Lead, zinc, copper	-	-	-	-	-

Bacteriological.

	Present in 100 c.c.				
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
B. Coli	Absent	Absent	5.0	2.0	Absent
B. Welchii	"	"	2.0	.01	"
Streptococci	"	"	Absent	Absent	"

The village of Kelly Bray in the Parish of Callington continues to be supplied from works belonging to a private Company and although the Council's officers have a certain amount of inspectoral responsibility in connection with this supply and distribution system, it would appear preferable that a public water supply should be administered by a public authority. The initiative of the private company in the provision of a piped water supply when the Council for that area had neglected to do so should, however, be appreciated.

Negotiations with the Liskeard Rural District Council continue and it is not unlikely that some working arrangement, whereby a satisfactory supply can be given to the part of Seaton in the Liskeard district will be reached between the two Councils.

From the above information it may be assumed that the district has little outstanding from the point of view of a public water supply but there still remains quite a few small places in the district which, if ones interpretation of the intention of the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1944, is correct, will be entitled to piped water supplies. Schemes will therefore be submitted to the Ministry for main extensions to these places in confident anticipation of contributions towards their cost being forthcoming.





## SEWERAGE.

Sewerage work during the year has been very limited and but for the completion of the system for the little village of Pillaton, no work of much importance has been undertaken. There are, however, quite a few places in the district which are urgently in need of pipe sewers, especially as most of the villages are served with water with adequate pressure from the mains. The village of St. Germans should be one of the first to be dealt with. Unfortunately difficulties can be foreseen in adopting a scheme which would not necessitate a somewhat expensive pumping plant but having regard to the proximity of tidal waters into which, only a few miles distant, sewage from ships having thousands of personnel is apparently discharged with little or no treatment. It does appear extravagant to indulge in an expensive pumping scheme when the construction of a covered septic tank and an effluent pipe to tidal waters is a practical proposition.

The district is faced with the consideration of schemes for the several places referred to in last year's report, and not a little preparatory work lies ahead if the Council embarks on the schemes which modern communities now expect and up-to-date Councils deem it essential to provide.

## REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

The continuation of a comprehensive system of refuse collection throughout the district is generally satisfactory though some complaints were put forward by householders in the built-up areas of the extreme south western part of the district where owing to the existence of some very narrow streets through which the Council's existing vehicle cannot pass and improvised methods of collection had to be adopted. It is not unlikely that an additional vehicle of smaller dimensions will be acquired to overcome this difficulty.

## PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.

Public Conveniences for both sexes are provided at Calstock, Gunnislake, Callington, Donderry, Kingsand and Cawsand. All are regularly cleansed and, with the exception of the two at Kingsand and Cawsand, of comparatively modern design and in good repair. These two need reconstructing and modernising, more particularly in regard to the internal fittings.

The Council's decision to extend and improve the existing convenience at Millbrook and provide new accommodation for women is a very wise one.

## SECTION D. Housing

Housing accommodation in the district like most other districts (not exclusively rural) has a considerable lee-way to make up due to war years, comparative inactivity, normal dilapidations and losses by enemy action. It is impracticable to attempt to demand extensive reconditioning of dwellings and the removal of houses which are incapable of being satisfactorily repaired before some pronounced progress is achieved in the erection or provision of new or other suitable alternative accommodation for displaced persons. With this end in view, the Council has concentrated on the preliminary work for the erection of 378 new houses in the district and during the





coming year over 100 are expected to be in course of construction. A general systematic detailed inspection of houses in the district at present is therefore regarded as premature and attention is being directed chiefly to individual unfit houses which require immediate action.

Considerable disappointment was felt in the district, by the lapsing in September of application for assistance under the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts, and to the new Bill which was withdrawn from Parliament, particularly having regard to the extent of improvements that have been carried out during the time the Acts have been in operation.

## SECTION E

### MILK.

This article of food has of recent years been considerably developed in the district and a large percentage of the farmers have contracts with the Milk Board for regular deliveries to the local collectors from, in many cases, somewhat improvised roadside stages where the churns are not always adequately protected from weather, or properly sealed. Liaison between the County Dairy Department and the Council's officers is quite good, and the co-operation of the two Departments is found to be extremely beneficial in securing the essential adaptation of premises before licences are issued to producers.

### MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Owing to practically no slaughtering of animals in the private slaughter houses in the district, very little diseased or unfit meat is discovered. Most of the home killed meat for the district comes from slaughter houses at Tavistock, Launceston or Liskeard, where local Meat Inspectors operate. Meat and other foods in retail shops are, however, frequently inspected by the Council's officers and any necessary action taken as occasion requires.

## SECTION F.

### Prevalence of and control over Infectious Disease.

(Figures in brackets are notification for 1944)

During the year there was an epidemic of measles throughout the Rural District 528 (45) cases were notified. There were 28 (132) cases of whooping cough notified, 7(5) cases of Diphtheria and 23 (25) cases of Scarlet Fever. Other infectious diseases notified were 17 (27) Pneumonia, 1 Erysipelas and 5 (1) cases of Malaria in non-civilian cases.



Table showing the Incidence of Infectious Diseases.

Age	Whooping Cough		Measles		Diphtheria		Scarlet Fever	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1	2	2	2	10	-	-	-	-
1 - 3	-	6	35	19	-	-	1	-
3 - 5	3	7	47	52	-	2	4	3
5 - 10	5	2	62	63	1	1	3	4
10 - 15	-	1	18	28	1	1	2	5
15 - 25	-	-	5	2	1	-	1	-
25 and over	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-
	10	18	172	156	3	4	11	12

Age	Pneumonia		Erysipelas		Malaria (Non-Civilian)	
	M	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 - 5	1	1	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	2	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 45	6	1	-	-	5	-
45 - 65	3	1	-	-	-	-
65 & over	2	-	1	-	-	-
	14	3	1	-	5	-

1 case of Encephalitis lethargica (Female) Age 35).

Tuberculosis.

11 cases of Respiratory tuberculosis and 2 non-respiratory cases were notified during the year. In addition 3 cases of Respiratory Tuberculosis were recorded from the Death Returns which had not been reported. During the year 5 deaths from Respiratory Tuberculosis were recorded and 2 of other forms.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

F. A. TROWBRIDGE.

